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ABSTRACT

Social studies textbooks currently used in Iran have been rewritten since 1979 to achieve the socialization of children into current Islamic political thought. An analysis of the content of current social studies textbooks concludes that explicitly political textbooks are used to teach state approved values and appropriate political behavior while preparing children to become citizens in a country with a narrowly defined framework of government ideology. The stated goal of the Iranian government is to use schooling to prepare such citizens, and the social studies textbooks used in the schools today successfully reflect these values. Islam is presented as a political religion and the topics included are used for conscious political ends. The world is presented in black and white terms, including the depiction of the former Pahlavi regime as corrupt and degrading, the United States and the West as the enemy, and political dissent as nonexistent. This paper, which analyzes content, is limited to determining what sort of ideal person the new Islamic textbooks wish to create; it is not intended to measure the effectiveness of the textbooks in attitude formation. A 57-item bibliography is included. (NL)

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THE SOCIALIZATION OF SCHOOLCHILDREN IN THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: A STUDY OF SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTBOOKS

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THE SOCIALIZATION OF SCHOOLCHILDREN IN THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: A STUDY OF SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTBOOKS

INTRODUCTION

In February 1979, a major social, political, and economic revolution took place in Iran. A 2500-year-old monarchy was overthrown and a republic was declared--the first in the history of that country. Along with significant changes in the political and economic sphere, the Iranian society witnessed a dramatic cultural transformation. A cultural revolution, aimed at replacing the old value system with new norms, building an ideal society based on Islamic criteria, and creating a New Islamic Person, has been the primary goal of the Islamic Republic of Iran since its establishment. In fact, one of the most important slogans of the postrevolutionary period is: "Our revolution is a revolution in values." Recognizing the importance of the school in the process of character formation, the Iranian government has assigned the task of bringing about a revolution in values to the educational system. The purpose of this paper is to identify the social, political, and cultural values and behavioral norms that the Islamic Republic of Iran is teaching its youth through the study of socialization in schools, by doing a content analysis of social studies textbooks since 1981.

Socialization has been defined by Roberta Sigel as "the process by which people learn to adopt the norms, values, attitudes, and behaviors accepted and practiced by the ongoing system."[1] Although socialization occurs throughout one's life span, it is widely believed

the adult social and political attitudes and beliefs are primarily developed during the early stages of life. Among the most significant childhood socialization agents are the family, the peer group, the mass media, and the school.[2] The latter, referred to as a "secondary" agent due to its formal structure and accessibility to government control,[3] plays an important role in shaping the value system of the child through the curriculum, teachers, textbooks, school environment, and extra-curricular activities. Textbooks, as primary means of formal instruction, are of special importance as official transmitters of acceptable social and political values. In every country, textbooks express what the ruling power wants the children to learn; they reflect the ideology of the dominant groups.[4] Textbooks clearly define the desirable attitudes and behavior of an "ideal" citizen. Both the manifest and latent content of school books are effective socializers of youngsters. Yet social studies textbooks play a leading, though not exclusive,role in attitude formation. In revolutionary societies, experiencing rapid social and political change, social studies texts become one of the key communicators of the acceptable values, and Iran is no exception.

POSTREVOLUTIONARY CHANGES IN THE IRANIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The educational system of Iran has not undergone major structural or organizational changes since the 1979 revolution. It remains highly centralized and still consists of a one-year preschool program, five-year primary education, three-year guidance cycle, and four-year secondary education. The changes that have taken place include: banning of coeducation at the elementary and secondary school level;

closing all private, foreign, and international schools; attempting to segregate teaching so that female teachers are assigned to girls' schools and males teach at boys' schools; preventing the entrance of female university students into certain "male-oriented" fields of study in accordance with the Islamic understanding of the "appropriate" role and position of women in society; purging "counter-revolutionary" teachers, and changing teacher training institutes' admissions criteria so that only "committed" and "doctrinaire" individuals can enter; introducing polytechnical education, known as the KAD project, to combine work and study; and, finally, establishing the Bureau of Fostering Activities in order to provide "moral guidance" and "informal Islamic education" through extra-curricular activities.[5] Major changes, however, have taken place in the content of postrevolutionary education.

Through what is known as the Cultural Revolution, the Iranian government launched a campaign to "purify" and "Islamize" the content of higher education, and create maktabi (committed and doctrinaire) students as opposed to mere experts. The universities were closed in the summer of 1980 for a period of three years during which the content of instruction, especially in the humanities and social sciences, was changed to conform to Islamic criteria. Criticizing the system of higher education for serving the "foreigners" and failing to produce "committed" individuals with Islamic culture and morality during the Pahlavi rule, the content of education was changed by emphasizing Islamic ideology and de-emphasizing Western norms and values.[6]

The Islamization of the content of education at the elementary and secondary school levels took a less drastic course. An ideologically-

approved curriculum was introduced, emphasizing the Qur'an, Islamic doctrines, and the Constitution of the Islamic Republic. Most importantly, the Ministry of Education changed the curricular content by rewriting the textbooks. Although some school books remained intact, such as the one in physics and mathematics, many textbooks were completely changed to present an exclusively Muslim perspective and reflect the world view of Islam. Among these texts are the ones in history, economics, sociology, psychology, religious studies, Persian literature, Arabic, art, and social studies.

The task of rewriting textbooks was completed two years after the establishment of the Islamic Republic, although minor changes were made even in the early months after the victory of the revolution. Since 1981, except for some minor additions and omissions, no major rewriting has taken place. Changing the content of textbooks has been the responsibility of the Organization of Research and Educational Planning of the Ministry of Education, and specifically the Bureau of Research, Curriculum, and Textbook Development. The Bureau is composed of twenty research groups that determine the content of the textbooks used in elementary and secondary schools as well as the educational texts taught in teacher training courses. Each group is responsible for preparing ideologically-approved textbooks in its field of specialization. Thus the social science research groups controls all the material used in social studies and social sciences textbooks. Each group is composed of qualified memebers of the Bureau, experts in the field of study, textbook developers, university professors, school teachers, and Islamic scholars. In the humanities and social sciences, members of

the clergy are also included to ensure the restructuring of the textbook content along Islamic lines.[7]

The educational system in Iran is highly centralized and has been since 1911. The Ministry of Education is in charge of general education (preschool, elementary, and secondary levels), teacher training, technical-vocational education, exceptional education, adult literacy programs, extra-curricular activities, curriculum development, textbook preparation, and grading and examinations. The result is the standardization of curriculum and uniformity of textbooks throughout the country. Given the absolute government control over the content of school books in Iran and the uniformity of texts, one can gain insight into the socialization process occurring throughout the nation and understand the values and behavioral norms taught in schools by studying the content of textbooks.

METHODOLOGY

In this study a content analysis of elementary and secondary school social studies textbooks has been done to determine the social, political, and cultural values taught by the Islamic Republic to Iranian school-children. The present author has studied the social studies books since their complete rewriting for the 1981-82 academic year. Since major changes have not been made after that date, this study analyzes the content of textbooks used during the 1986-87 academic year, including important topics in earlier books that have later been omitted. A qualitative analysis of the topics discussed in the social studies textbooks, including a content description of the themes, will identify

the norms and values deemed desirable by the Islamic Republic.

Elementary and secondary school textbooks are published and distributed by the Ministry of Education at the beginning of each school year. All texts are written in Persian--the official language and script of Iran. Although Persian is the language of only 50.2 percent of the population, it is regarded as the national and unifying language of Iran and the medium of instruction in schools.[8] All school books were distributed at no charge until 1984, and ever since urban pupils pay for books used after the fifth grade while the ones living in rural areas continue receiving them free of charge.

Social studies is one of the major subjects taught at the primary education level (age 6-10) beginning with the third grade and continuing in the fourth and fifth grades. The social studies textbooks of the latter two grades are divided into three parts--namely, geography, history, and civics. It is in the third section that the most direct and manifest socialization attempt occurs. The three-year guidance cycle (age 11-13), equivalent to the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades, also includes social studies in its curriculum. The remaining years of the four-year secondary education program (age 14-17) use social science textbooks with the exception of the eleventh grade. Social studies textbooks used in Iran are paper-bound books averaging 139 pages in length. There is one book for each grade. Pictures and drawings are used in the books taught in the third through the eighth grades. In the same grades, lessons are followed by questions related to the content and sometimes brief exercises to be completed as homework.

FINDINGS

The topics discussed in Iranian social studies textbooks could be divided into two major categories. The first category consists of apolitical, non-ideological, informative material that aims at acquainting elementary and secondary school pupils with the structure and function of the government, the responsibilities of various institutions, and the rights of citizenship. Examples would be the detailed discussions about the office of the presidency and its responsibilities, the characteristics of the Iranian armed forces, the structure of the Islamic parliament, and the duties of the legislative, judicial, and executive branches. The second category of topics aims at the political socialization and character education of schoolchildren, imparting value-laden, ideological information about the desirable social, political, and cultural values and behavioral norms of the Islamic Republic. The primary aim of the second category is to convey direct or indirect messages about what a New Islamic Person should believe in and how he/she should behave in an ideal Islamic society. Given the purpose of this study, only the second group of topics have been analyzed, and the findings are organized into five major categories: personal attributes, social relationships, political beliefs, cultural values, and role models.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES OF A NEW ISLAMIC PERSON

The social studies textbooks of the Islamic Republic of Iran contain direct guidelines as to the desirable qualities of a model citizen living in an ideal society. From the very beginning, the individual is placed in an Islamic society in which ninety eight

percent of the population are Muslims. This trend continues throughout the elementary and secondary school level with very little mention of other non-Muslim Iranians. The Islamic society is defined as one governed by Muslim laws and inhabited by people with Islamic ethics and virtues. It is characterized by justice and equality and a relentless struggle against any form of oppression and moral corruption. It is a society in which all symbols of moral decline, as defined by Islam, are eradicated. Thus it is free of gambling, drinking, prostitution, "seductive" music, dance, and songs, and immoral books and magazines. An ideal Islamic society is one in which its memebers are in constant battle with both their internal enemies--namely, carnal desires, and external foes. The search of the Islamic Republic to create such an ideal society will make it a model for other Muslim and oppressed nations.[9] The people living in this ideal society must, therefore, possess certain qualities that will make them eligible members.

The most important characteristics of the New Islamic Person are his/her belief in God, love of nature, piety and chastity, honesty, trustworthiness, thrift and frugality, knowledge, sense of responsibility and dependability, loyalty and devotion, modesty, simplicity, and passion for equality and justice. The model individual is one who has cleansed him/herself of carnal desires and sins, and as such is different from his/her counterpart in the West whose life is aimed at pleasure seeking and fun. Furthermore, while the materialist ideologies of the West advocate economic well-being, personal comfort, and self-indulgence, and value competition, ambition, and greed above

all else, Islam teaches cooperation, service to others, charity, and self-sacrifice.[10] It is the same greed and ambition that has led Western powers to conquer, subjugate, and plunder other nations, while Islam invites its followers to defend the oppressed and assist the downtrodden.

One of the most important values transmitted by social studies books is the belief in martyrdom. In Islam, and especially in Shi'ism, a martyr is not simply one who is killed because of his/her religious beliefs. Martyrdom is regarded as an extension of service to others; it is the highest form of self-sacrifice. A martyr is one who gives his/her life for the betterment of society and the welfare of the people.[11] A martyr is one who struggles against all forms of injustice and oppression. Martyrdom is a conscious choice made by a Muslim when he/she realizes that his/her life may be the last effective weapon against the enemy, and that what he/she achieves in the other world is far more precious than existence in this one. Iran has been the scene of martyrdom since the early days of the 1979 revolution, and the names and graves of martyrs have filled the newspapers and cemeteries since the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war. It is interesting to note that although martyrdom has always been discussed in social studies textbooks, beginning with the 1984-85 academic year, tenth grade texts have included in-depth analysis of the role and meaning of martyrdom in Islam. Given the human loss suffered by Iran since the onset of the war in 1980, this may be an attempt to justify it for the young and explain the necessity and honor of sacrificing one's life for Islam and the revolution.

Iranian social studies textbooks do not discuss martyrdom as merely an important concept in Islam, but rather as one of the pillars of the Iranian revolution and the key to the success of the Islamic Republic.[12] The "search for martyrdom" has become a value in contemporary Iranian society, and martyrs are regarded as heroes whose path is to be followed by others. Young pupils are told that a society in which the desire to become a martyr is an esteemed value can never be conquered, since surrender and defeat come about only as a result of fear of death. "A nation that believes in martyrdom will never be enslaved."[13]

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

The Family. Iranian social studies textbooks present the youth with guidelines concerning ideal relations with other members of the society, among the most important of which are family relationships. Family is a vital institution in Islam and the Islamic Republic regards it as "the fundamental unit of society and the major center for the growth and advancement of man."[14] Iranian youth is, therefore, encouraged to marry and have children as advocated by the Qur'an and the Prophet Mohammad. The permanency of family relations is considered to be a crucial element in maintaining stability at the societal level, and Iranian pupils are told that single people commit more crimes than those whose family ties keep them as responsible members of society. The high rates of crime, alcoholism, and juvenile delinquency in capitalist and communist nations are due to the lack of importance attached to stable family relations in those socieites. Although divorce is legally and morally approved in Islam as the last resort,

anything that destabilizes family relations is condemned and prohibited. To prevent "forbidden" relations between unwed members of the opposite sex, the Islamic Republic emphasizes the veiling of women and segregation of men and women in public places, prohibits "seductive" films, music, and dance, and severely punishes those who commit adultery. The result is lower divorce rates in Muslim nations as opposed to Christian societies in which divorce is not permitted.[15]

Social studies books discuss the role and function of every member of the family. In the fourth garde, the father is introduced as the one who "usually" works outside the home and provides food, shelter, and clothing for his family. The mother is presented as the "internal manager" who cooks, cleans , and raises the children. In addition, she helps them with their school work and introduces them to Islam and their religious duties. In some families, the women work outside. In rural areas, pupils are informed, women help their husbands in agricultural tasks, carpet-weaving, and milking. In the cities, some women work in schools, hospitals, factories, and offices. Yet there are some women in certain societies who "hold outside jobs merely for earning extra income rather than based on real financial need."[16] The message is that women work outside the home only to help their husbands and strictly within the traditional structure of "appropriate" jobs for women. They may be presented as nurses, teachers, factory workers, and secretaries, but certainly not as engineers, doctors, or university professors. To hold a job for personal fulfillment, career aspirations, or financial independence is frowned upon.

While the mother is the primary caretaker of her children and the father provides them with the essential necessities of survival, the

children have specific duties in the household towards their parents. The children study hard, they are pious, honest, neat, organized, punctual, responsible, and help their parents and neighbors. While the older members of the family love, guide, and advise the younger ones, the latter have utmost respect for their parents. Obedience is highly emphasized in textbooks and discussed as an important factor in maintaining family stability. Regarding one's parents as old-fashioned and traditional whose advices are to be ignored and ridiculed will lead to family disorder and breakdown as witnessed in secular societies. Respect and obedience should include the grandparents in extended families. The young people can learn a lot from the experiences of the elderly, while providing them with support and aid during the difficult years of old age. Once again secular societies are criticized for abandoning their elderly and sending them to nursing homes, a symbol of the unimportance of strong family relations in those nations.[17]

Individual-State Relations. The Islamic state in Iran is presented as a popular government fought for, elected, and supoorted by the people. It is characterized by adherence to Islamic doctrines, strife for independence from foreigners, struggle against moral corruption, and solidarity with the poor and oppressed. Furthermore, it is governed by pious leaders who have come to power as a result of their devotion and ability rather than wealth or foreign support. The relationship between the people and the government is, therefore, based on unity, support, trust, and mutual assistance. The young schoolchildren in Iran are told that their duties towrads their state include supervision

of and participation with the government. Ideal citizens cooperate with the state and do not seek to weaken it. They take part in social and political affairs and provide constructive criticism. They obey the law, since in an Islamic society governed by religious leaders disobeying the law is a sin and a disregard for the will of God and the Prophet.[18]

The social studies textbook read by eleven-years-old pupils states that as long as the Islamic Republic adheres to its original principles of independence, freedom, and Islam, the ideal citizen will support it wholeheartedly. He/she will defend it against foreign aggression through self-sacrifice and martyrdom. If the government needs financial aid to run the country, the New Islamic Person will help not only through taxes, but also by donating his/her income. Young pupils are told that many soldiers and revolutionary guards who lost their lives in the war had asked in their will that their savings be given to the state. Furthermore, by moderation in consumption, every citizen can help bring about economic independence. In fact, a house wife who avoids waste and reduces expenses is a soldier fighting at the economic front, helping the government bring about self-sufficiency in production.

Another way to serve the state is by performing one's best at whatever occupation one is engaged in. An industrial worker, a farmer, a government official, and a student is responsible for trying hard to achieve the highest level possible in order to serve the people and the government. Lastly, ideal citizens are portrayed as ones who act as "the eyes and ears of the state," providing it with essential information regarding what goes on among the people. Schoolchildren are told that in societies in which the government does not belong to and represent

the people, complex security and intelligence-gathering organizations are used to gather information, whereas the Islamic Republic has a "thirty six million-member intelligence service" composed of the majority of the population that supports the government.[19]

Relations with Other Members of the Society. Social studies textbooks in the Islamic Republic emphasize the equality of all Iranians regardless of race, color, ethnicity, language, or religion. The school books attempt to convey the message that a model citizen should not regard those who are different from him/her as inferior. Fifth graders are told that in an Islamic society, a Muslim should not claim superiority over non-Muslims since they are his/her "religious brothers and sisters" even if they do not share a common faith.[20] It should be noted that the "recognized" religious minorities of Iran include Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians.

Furthermore, Iranians are composed of many different linguistic and ethnic groups that should be treated equally by every member of the society. Iranian pupils are told that such visible natural distinctions as race or color are irrelevant and should never cause segregation or division in society. Textbooks criticize those nations that, considering themselves "civilized" and others "backward," still believe in the supremacy of the whites. In Islam, only piety brings about privilege.[21]

In addition, an ideal Iranian has a religious duty and a human responsibility towards the elderly, handicapped, disabled, and needy. Feelings of superiority over the misfortunate members of the society is strongly condemned and no excuse is justifiable for failing to attend to their needs. Commitment to the cause of the weak and downtrodden and

and solidarity with the oppressed is encouraged throughout the social studies textbooks and regarded as a highly laudable virtue.[22]

POLITICAL VALUES

The content of Iranian social studies textbooks is explicitly political and every topic conveys a political message. Even such seemingly value free subjects as the use of the leisure time, the necessity of environmental protection, and the role of the mass media carry political connotations. The primary goal is to acquaint the schoolchildren with socio-political issues, instill in them the "approved" values, and teach them the "appropriate" political behavior.

Politics and Religion. The relationship between politics and religion and the political nature of Islam is the first and most important value transmitted to young children. In the fourth grade textbook, the mosque is presented as a community center in which religious matters as well as political issues are discussed. It is a holy place and an institution that prepares people for active political involvement in the Islamic Republic.[23] Throughout the educational system, pupils are told that Islam is a political religion that is not limited to personal piety and individual faith. Every religious act in Islam such as praying, fasting, pilgrimage, and Friday prayers is a political act, and believers are asked to be actively involved in the social, political, and economic affairs of their society. The best example of the political nature of religious acts is the Friday prayers ritual in postrevolutionary Iran in which the prayer leader, holding a weapon in his hand, discusses the socio-political issues of importance

followed by actual praying. The life of the Prophet Mohammad as the messenger of God and a statesman and the numerous Qur'anic decrees on social, political, and economic matters are also cited as proof of the relationship between religion and politics. The reasons for the existence of such a bond in Islam are many, but the most important one offered to schoolchildren is the believer's duty to struggle against injustice and oppression. Only a Muslim who is engaged in political activity can bring about the intended result which inevitably means politics and religion are tied.[24] Iranian pupils are told that political decisions should not be separated from and opposed to religion and that is how the Islamic Republic is governed.

The idea of separating religious matters from political issues is presented as an imported ideology rooted in the Western experience. It is the result of the Christians' belief that one should "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and unto Christ what is Christ's," and the European struggle for the separation of church and state. Such secular thought has infiltrated Muslim societies as a result of colonialism. Recognizing the strong bond between Islam and politics and the Muslim doctrine of involvement in political affairs, colonial powers realized that the best way to disarm Muslims would be to neutralize the religion. Without attacking Islam and insulting popular faith, colonial powers gradually depoliticized the religion and reduced it to the realm of private, personal piety.[25]

Yet colonialism could not have succeeded without aid from "insiders." The two major collaborators have been the government and the "Westoxicated" intellectuals. The past rulers of Iran are

introduced as despots who, fearing the justice-seeking ideology of Islam, have continuously attempted to depoliticize it and drive it away from the social scene. In the modern age oppressive rulers, who were also the puppets of foreign rule, served the interests of the West by aiding colonial powers in the separation of religion and politics. The above task was completed by Western-educated intellectuals who had come to believe that the reason for the advancement of the West is the non-interference of religious doctrines in socio-politcal matters. When the intellectuals came to positions of power, especially during the Pahlavi rule, and took control over the political, economic, and educational institutions, the mission was accomplished.

The two major secular political ideologies introduced to the political arena have been Western nationalism and Eastern socialism. Young Iranians are told that nationalism entered the political scene of Iran as a result of "Westoxication"--defined as the infatuation with the West and the poisoning of an indigenous culture by Westernization.[26] They are informed that nationalism, in direct opposition to the teachings of Islam, advocates separation of religion and politics, negates unity and solidarity solely on the basis of faith, and emphasizes national identity. As such it brings about detachment from the rest of the Muslim world and can lead to national chauvinism. Nationalists are portrayed as educated individuals who, despite possible personal piety, do not belong to and cannot communicate with the popular masses for whom Islam is a total ideology. They are "soil-worshippers" whose beliefs and values have been shaped by the capitalist West and are, therefore, alien and opposed to the indigenous culture. Even more detached from the masses and their

religous beliefs are the "Eastoxicated" intellectuals who also serve the interests of foreigners by advocating not only the separation of personal faith from political action, but also negating religion as a whole as superstitious, non-scientific "opiate of the masses." Social studies textbooks present both the "Westoxicated" and "Eastoxicated" individuals as direct or indirect collaborators of colonialism, who wittingly or unwittingly served the oppressive and morally corrupt political regimes of Iran before 1979.[27]

Islamic Community. Dismissing national, geographic, racial, ethnic, and linguistic basis of solidarity, the Islamic Republic teaches its youth to value Islamic unity above and beyond any other unifying force. At an early age, Iranian pupils learn to identify with Muslims around the world. They are taught to consider themselves as members of the universal Islamic umma or community of believers. Commitment to and defense of the rights of Muslims becomes a duty so that the plight of the Palestinians or Afghan people becomes a concern for every Muslim Iranian. A recurring theme in social studies textbooks is the equality of Muslims regardless of national, racial, ethnic, or linguistic origins. In the fourth grade book, a nine-year-old learns that "all Muslims--whether they white or black, Iranian, Turk, Arab, African, or Asian, or even from Europe, America, or the Soviet Union--are members of the Islamic community and thus equal and brothers."[28] What unifies them is the beliet in Allah, in the Prophet Mohammad, and the teachings of Qur'an. At a higher grade, pupils learn about the unique cultural traditions and historical experiences shared by Iranians, yet they are reminded that

none of those national traits should prevent their solidarity with other Muslims because "Their sorrow is our grief and their happiness is ours, too."[29]

In addition to being equal, Muslims should also be united. It is only through lack of unity that the community of believers could be defeated by the enemies of Islam, losing their pride and honor. Differences among Muslims pave the way for colonial domination and the rule of corrupt governments. The young pupil is told that the above two enemies of Islam have always tried to bring about disunity by dividing Muslims on the basis of language, race, and the color of the skin. Even more dangerous is the infiltration of nationalist thought in Muslim nations. Nationalism is, according to the twelfth grade social science book, the last and most destructive colonial device to lessen the unifying influence of Islam and prevent the formation of a single Muslim community. Nationalism is a divisive measure created by colonialism and implemented by Christian missionaries, French and English Orientalists, and "Westoxicated" intellectuals in Islamic societies. After World War I, Arab nationalism, especially in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan, was encouraged and the "superiority" of the Arabs as the first Muslims and followers of the Prophet was advocated. Later the Turks also began to claim supremacy over other Easterners and especially the Arabs. Pan-Arabism and Pan-Turkism, Iranian pupils are told, not only led to disunity and hostility among Muslims, but also paved the road for the occupation of Palestine. The success of Zionism was made possible by the support of imperialist powers and the disarray among Islamic nations.[30]

The ideal citizen of the Islamic Republic regards all Muslims as equals and strives to bring about a strong, unified Islamic community--the key to resistance against Western domination.

Independence. The Iranian Constitution clearly declares the aim of the Islamic Republic to be the attainment of social, political, economic, and cultural independence.[31] The belief in the absolute necessity of independence from foreign rule is a recurring theme in social studies textbooks. To illustrate the degradation of being a dependent nation and the resultant loss of honor, pride, and dignity, the school books have devoted numerous sections to descriptions of prerevolutionary Pahlavi rule. The Pahlavi regime is introduced as a despotic, unpopular, morally corrupt, unjust government that "sold" Iran to foreign masters and traded its independence for wealth and power for the royal family.[32] The late Shah--Mohammad Reza Pahlavi--and his father --Reza Pahlavi--are referred to as "agents of colonialism" and "criminals." While the latter is labeled as "the servant of British colonialism," the late Shah enjoyed support from the "Great Satan"--namely, the United States, in exchange for Iran's identity.[33]

Independence in Iranian textbooks is defined as the expulsion of foreigners and "foreign-lovers" from decision-making positions and regaining control over one's own destiny. It means the ability to decide and act "irrespective of the approval or disapproval of the West."[34] Western penetration into the domestic affairs of Iran during the reign of the Shah is likened to the trespassing of a thief into one's home. The young pupil is told that just as a robber would take away the valuables belonging to the rightful owner, the West has

continuously robbed the country's natural resources and wealth. The solution is the abolition of such unequal, unjust relationships.

Yet even an independent country that is not economically self-sufficient cannot maintain its independence. Iranian schoolchildren are on numerous occasions told about the ways their country could become self-reliant in the agricultural and industrial fields. More importantly, however, they are offered guidelines as to the appropriate behavior in the difficult early stages of independence. Young Iranians are told that it is the duty of Muslims to be moderate in consumption, avoid waste, and lower their expectations. By studying hard during the early years of life, using one's knowledge to produce adequate agricultural goods, and one's creativity to manufacture industrial products, a Muslim can contribute to the eventual freedom from the chains of enslavement. In an emotional appeal to the youth, the social studies texts state that a nation that has suffered the degradation of dependence willendure difficulties and deprivation rather than ask for help from the "enemies of Islam." "We will eat only bread and cheese, but we will stand on our own feet."[35]

The West. One of the primary goals of values education in the Islamic Republic is bringing about a "correct" attitude towards the West. The term West has been used in Iranian textbooks to mean different things at different times. In certain discussions, it is used to refer to those societies that are governed by secular ideologies based on the denial of spirituality and emphasis on materialism. As such it is not synonymous with the geographic West or Western capitalist

nations, and includes the socialist countries as well.[36] In discussions about world politics and international relations, the term West is utilized in reference to the industrialized, capitalist nations of Western Europe and the United States; the term East applies to the socialist countries and specifically the Soviet Union. Most often, however, the West includes colonial powers, imperialist nations, and enemies of Islam. Throughout the educational system, the Iranian schoolchildren are presented with information regarding unequal relations between the West and the Third World and the crimes committed by the former. They are told that it is the duty of every Muslim to engage in a relentless battle against the West and all that it represents. To convince the youth that the West is indeed the "satan" that is to be fought against at every level, Iranian social studies textbooks have devoted many passages to exposing the evil nature of the West.

The West is presented as an oppressive, criminal force that has attempted to conquer the Muslim world, exploit its natural wealth, oppress its people, and crush its spirit. In the social science book studied in the tenth grade, the goals of Western colonial and imperialist powers are discussed at length. At the economic level, the primary aim of the West is to rob the natural resources of Third World nations, exploit the cheap labor of the oppressed people, and create a safe and expanded market for its manufactured goods. Youngsters are told that the West is driven by an inhuman search for profit, and, given its disregard for moral principles, it will continue its evil ways. At the political level, following the principle of "divide and rule," Western powers seek to destroy the unity of people. By putting

native agents into positions of power, the West infiltrates every sphere of life in Third World nations. While claiming to be the defender of human rights, the West commits the most atrocious crimes. Interfering in the domestic affairs of other nations, manufacturing deadly weapons that can destroy the world and its entire population, engaging in unjust wars, supporting and arming counter-revolutionary criminals to defeat national liberation movements and young revolutions are among the crimes commited by the West againat humanity as presented in Iranian texts.[37]

The West is also guilty of cultural imperialism and "poisoning" the minds in Third World nations. Among the major offenses have been distributing immoral films, music, and literature; encouraging higher levels of consumption and use of luxury items manufactured in the West such as cosmetics and fashionable clothes; and attacking the cultural heritage of once proud nations by taking away their identity and replacing it with pale carbon copies of the Western personality. The young Iranian is thus warned about the intentions of the West and invited to struggle against it. He/she is told that the oppressed nations of the world are alone in this battle since the international organizations created to prevents crimes committed against the weak and the deprived have themselves become tools in the hands of powerful nations. The United Nations is cited as an example of inability to serve the have-nots of the world due to its heavy reliance on the unjust superpowers. The schoolchildren are told that the only solution is the unity of all conscious and conscientious nations in a single universal force to battle against Western tyranny and oppression.[38] It should be noted that although the socialist East is not as frequently mentioned as the

capitalist West, it is also under attack, and Marxism-Leninism is often discussed as an invalid philosophy whose claim to free the oppressed from bondage has proved unsuccessful if not hypocritical.

Foreign Policy. Teaching Iranian schoolchildren the "revolutionary" way to face the West has become an important part of political socialization in the Islamic Republic. The young pupils are continuously being informed about the foreign policy of their country and how it is the only way through which real independence can be gained. The first attempt is made in the fifth grade textbook in which the basis of Iranian foreign relations is described in the slogan "Neither East, Nor West, Islamic Republic." It refers to the desire to create an Islamic government based on the teachings of Islam with no ties to either the socialist or the capitalist world.

In textbooks read in higher grades, pupils are told that it is wrong to think that the world is made up of two camps, one of which Third World nations should join in order to survive. The truth is that both superpowers are imperialist, aiming at subjugating and exploiting the weaker nations for their own interests. The imperialist nature of capitalist nations such as the United States is equivalent to the "social imperialism" of the Soviet Union as exemplified by the invasion of East Europe and Afghanistan.[39] The only solution is to have an independent policy towards both camps, refusing to rely on either one. It should be noted, however, that despite criticisms of Soviet "expansionism," the United Sates is represented as the major enemy and the symbol of tyranny and oppostion against independence-seeking nations. The title of the "Great Satan" is still reserved for the United States.

The topic of Iranian foreign policy is repeated many times in social studies books, each year witnessing a more in-depth analysis of how an ideal citizen should liik at the world. A young Iranian is shown a somewhat simplified picture of the international scene. The nations of the world are divided into four major categories: Muslim countries, other Third World nations, non-belligerent states, and the aggressive powers. The relationship between the Islamic Republic and the latter group is a hostile one based upon caution and mistrust and the struggle to remain independent. The bond with other Muslim nations is based on "brotherly commitment" to each other and aimed forming a strong, united Islamic community that could struggle against aggressive powers. The relationship with the other two categories ranges from peaceful relations with non-belligerent states to active support for Third World liberation movements. Iranian youth is told that although solidarity with Muslim organizations has priority due to ideological similarities, the Islamic Republic supports all oppressed and deprived peoples in their struggle against imperialist powers.[40]

Schoolchildren are informed that three important principles form the basis of Iranian foreign policy. First, under no circumstances should Islamic principles be ignored or overlooked. Second, the Islamic Republic should aim at "reaching" the masses in other nations and conveying the liberating message of Islam to them rather than maintaining formal and ceremonial relations with oppressive governments. Third, Iranian foreign policy should not be based on conservatism and compromise.[41]

Given the detailed descriptions of ideal political behavior towards

other nations, it is surprising to note that discussion about the Iran-Iraq war is kept at a minimum in Iranian textbooks. There is no chapter or even section devoted to the topic and war is briefly mentioned amid discussion about other issues. The "imposed" war is referred to in the ninth grade in the chapter about leisure time in which young pupils are encouraged to use their free time as an opportunity to serve the war front. They are told that while many have gone to fight the enemy at the battlefield, others remain behind to serve their country and aid the fighters by preparing nonmilitary necessities such as baking bread, sewing clothes, preparing canned food and jam.[42] The war is mentioned again as part of a discussion about the anti-Iranian propaganda of international mass media in their coverage of the Iran-Iraq war.[43] A more political discussion of the war appears in the tenth grade social science book in which the Iraqi aggression against Iran is portrayed not simply as the battle waged by Iran's neighbor, but rather as a war by the tyrannical superpowers against the Iranian revolution. The secret of Iranian courage and resistance in the battlefield is described as an extension of the "martyrdom-seeking spirit" that has developed among Shi'is throughout history.[44] The reason for such brief and indirect treatment of the bloody war that has affected so many Iranian families is not known. It may be reasonable, however, to assume that the task of informing the young schoolchildren about the social, economic, and political causes and effects of the war is assigned to other agents of socialization and life itself.

CULTURAL VALUES

Alongside political and economic independence, the Islamic Republic

has determined freedom from the cultural domination of the West to be an important goal of the revolution. According to the Iranian authorities, foreign ideological influences have to be eradicated and replaced by the values of Islam. Iranian cultural transformation and the revolution in values, therefore, is considered to be none other than returning to Islamic teachings. The lost identity to which Iranians should return in order to regain independence is the Islamic identity. The complex issue of the necessity of a cultural revolution and the discussion of desirable cultural values and beliefs is analyzed during the last years of secondary education. At an earlier stage, only the Pahlavis' attack on the Iranian-Islamic identity is mentioned. Such policies as attempting to purge the Persian language from Arabic words,and changing the Islamic calender to an imperial one are related to schoolchildren as shameful endeavors to negate the Islamic nature of Iranian culture and identity.[45]

A complete discussion of cultural domination takes place in the twelfth grade social science book. Pupils are informed about the various forms of Western exploitation of the Third World nations--namely, colonialism, neocolonialism, and imperialism. They are warned about the danger of neocolonialism. Unlike classical colonialism during which the direct political, economic, and military control of the colonial power was evident at all times, neocolonialism ensures continued dependence through indirect cultural means. Although the colonizer is not physically present, the culture of the colonized nation remains subservient to foreign needs and interests. Imperialism is considered as the continuation of colonialism in the twentieth century and is

defined as unequal, oppressive relations between strong and weak nations. The terms colonialism and imperialism are thus interchangeably used in all textbooks. Iranian schoolchildren are told that the most important and complex form of domination in the present age is cultural imperialism. It is the process through which the colonial powers bring about cultural dependence by "brainwashing" and humiliating Third World nations, leading them to blind imitation of the West and complete denial of their own values, beliefs, and traditions.[46]

Young Iranians are told that imperialist powers have claimed the West to be the center of civilization, science, and technology and thus the yardstick with which to measure the degree of "advancement" or "backwardness" of other nations. The West has also claimed superiority for the white race in comparison with which all others are backward and inferior. The integrity of other cultures is thus challenged and their identity questioned. This, more than anything else, prepares the path of cultural reliance and dependence because once a single way of life is defined as the best and superior, others have no choice but to imitate it and come close to it in order to be considered "civilized" and "advanced."[47] This marks the beginning of a painful, tragic, and humiliating process--namely, the loss of one's identity--which, young Iranians are told, is to be avoided at all costs.

The other channel through which colonialism poisons the indigenous culture is through the mass media, books, magazines, films, and other sources of communication. Most importantly, however, servitude of the mind comes about through the educational system. By taking control over educational planning, teacher training, and textbook preparation,

colonialism ensures long-term cultural dependence. In their physical absence, imperialists have assigned their "loyal" followers--the "Westoxicated" intellectuals and educators--responsible for completing the task of bringing about cultural reliance.

Regarding the loss of one's identity and alienation from the indigenous value system as a most debasing experience, the Islamic Republic uses social studies textbooks to instill "appropriate" cultural values and combat dependence. Schoolchildren are frequently reminded that true independence cannot come about unless a nation arms itself with its native values and cultural heritage in a battle against the colonial culture. Without a cultural revolution, imperialism will always be able to penetrate the cultural life of a nation. During the Pahlavi rule the colonial culture was reflected in the state ideology, and the latter was in direct contrast to the popular culture. The materialist, corrupt, oppressive, and Westernized value system advocated by the Shah's regime, young pupils are informed, was opposed to the spiritual, justice-seeking ideology of the masses. The 1979 revolution was the victory of the popular culture over the state ideology.[48] The reason for the postrevolutionary Iran's ability to maintain its cultural independence is the establishment of an Islamic value system and a fundamental cultural revolution inspired by the teachings of Islam.

Achieving cultural independence is not possible unless rejects alien ideologies and is proud of one's own values. To teach schoolchildren pride in their indigenous culture and inheritance and convince them that there is no shame in being different from the West, Iranian educational

authorities have used the curricular content to depict the negative aspects of Western life. Young pupils are informed that the materialist value system of the West has led to many social problems among which are high crime rates, drug addiction, and juvenile delinquency. Furthermore, in a culture in which a human being is considered as yet another means of production and judged solely based on his/her appearance and material belongings, the people are plagued by psychological problems such as feelings of futility and alienation.[49] The above example is part of a widespread attempt to de-mystify the West and illustrate the "dead end" to which the Western civilization has led humanity. Schoolchildren are warned that the Western way is not necessarily the best way and certainly not the only way.

Iranian schoolchildren are taught that following the Western model has led to the "death of spirituality;" for oppressed nations it will bring eternal dependence and servitude. The question is them raised as to what is the solution for Third World nations, and how can they regain their self-esteem and achieve cultural independence? The ninth grade social science textbook provides answers for both Muslims and non-Muslims. All oppressed people should return to their indigenous identity and culture and struggle against foreign ideological influences. "Return to Self," as advocated by Frantz Fanon, is the solution. Shunning political and cultural colonialism while trying to build new societies on the basis of Western models will lead to eventual defeat and further dependence. The solution is "to learn and know everything that others have learned and known and then forget about it and think ourselves."[50] The information provided by Islam regarding every aspect of life will

aid Muslims in their struggle against Western domination. In postrevolutionary Iran, therefore, cultural independence can be attained by rejecting imported ideologies and returning to one's self--that is, the Iranian-Islamic identity.

MODELS

The models represented as examples of appropriate beliefs and proper behavior in Iranian texts are all religious leaders who struggled against injustice and oppression. They include the prophets who invited people to resist and fight against the oppressive powers of their time. In accordance with the Islamic belief in the bond between religion and politics, religious models are political leaders as well. The Prophet Mohammad, schoolchildren are reminded, was a holy figure and a statesman. The Shi'i Imams (spiritual leaders) were also engaged in political activities, some of whom were imprisoned or killed as a result of their actions. Imam Hosein, known as "the great martyr" in the struggle against tyranny, injustice, and oppression, is set as an example for all true Muslims. His revolutionary movement against Yazid--the unjust and corrupt ruler of his time, his courage and bravery in refusing to compromise, and his martyrdom for bringing about Islamic justice have reserved Imam Hosein a unique place in the hearts of each and every member of the Shi'i community.[51] Aspiring to follow the path of Imam Hosein is presented as the most honorable course to follow in social studies textbooks.

Besides being political figures who fought "just" causes, the Prophet and Imams are also set as examples of ideal personal attributes

and behavior. The Prophet is presented as the "perfect exemplar." In the ninth grade, schoolchildren read that the Qur'an has determined Mohammad to be the example to follow. He is depicted as the kindest husbandand father, the most beneficient ruler, the most sympathetic companion of the weak and needy, the bravest fighter, the most generous, honest, and knowledgeable person, the most just arbitrator, the most devout and pious Muslim, and most uncompromising and severe with oppressors.[52] It is difficult to imagine any other model as perfect as the Prophet, yet the textbooks have also presented Imam Ali as an ideal example of Muslim behavior. In short anecdotes about Imam Ali's life and caliphate, the young readers get acquainted with his modesty and humility, indifference to material wealth, and piety.

The second group of models in social studies textbooks are the ulama, the learned religious leaders and Islamic scholars of Iran and carriers of Muslim law and education. In the fifth grade text, the ulama are introduced as the defenders of Islam and the true representatives of the people. They are the staunch opponents of domestic despotism and foreign domination, a position they have held since the nineteenth century. The ulama are set as examples for young schoolchildren for their personal attributes. They are represented as the "symbols of morality, purity, piety, and humility," and the sources of respect and trust in society[53] Yet they remain as role models basically for their political beliefs and activities. The ulama are examples of resistance to servitude and symbols of independence. Except for few "court ulama," referring to those who supported the Shah, the religious leaders of Iran remained politically and economically

independent from the Pahlavi regime. Most importantly, the ulama maintained their cultural independence. Their educational system, life style, and dressing pattern remained immune from foreign influences. Young pupils are taught that the ulama were the last stronghold of the Iranian-Islamic identity undermined by the Pahlavis and attacked by alien ideologies.[54]

The social studies texts of the Islamic Republic acquaint pupils with the struggles of ulama in modern Iranian history. Many passages are devoted to Ayatollah Shirazi's role in the Tobacco Protest of 1891-92; the oppositional role of ulama during the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-11; the "martyrdom" of Ayatollah Modarres during the reign of Reza Pahlavi; the activities of religious leaders during the oil nationalization movement of the early 1950s; and, finally, the role and leadership of the ulama in the 1979 revolution. Yet the life and struggle of no single religious leader has been discussed as extensively as that of Avatollah Khomeini. His personal characteristics, social viewpoints, political beliefs and actions, speeches and writings constitute a significant portion of social studies textbooks.

Ayatollah Khomeini is presented as the leader of the 1979 "Islamic" revolution, founder of the Islamic Republic, and the savior of Iran from foreign rule and its native agents. In the ninth grade textbook, he is introduced as the "rightful heir" of the prophets and Shi'i Imams, who fought against the oppressive powers of his time just as Moses opposed Pharaoh, Jesus resisted Caesar, and Mohammad challenged the Persian king Khosrow Parviz.[55] His image is of a model to be followed by young pupils. He is regarded as being pious, devoted,

faithful, sincere, just, honorable, knowledgeable, generous, and modest. He is referred to as the psychologist and sociologist of Iranian society due his deep understanding of the people and his ability to communicate with them. In a discussion about his life style, it is said that despite being the ruler of a nation and the spiritual leader of all oppressed Muslims, Ayatollah Khomeini has maintained the simplicity and modesty of his powerless days in exile.[56]

If religious leaders are presented as role models whose examples should be followed by schoolchildren, "Westoxicated" intellectuals are the counter-models whose values and beliefs represent all that is deemed inappropriate by the Islamic Republic. Whereas the ulama are portrayed as heroes, Western-educated intellectuals are the villains in an Islamic society. Pupils are told that the first "Westoxicated" intellectuals were Iranians who left their country to study abroad in the nineteenth century. Upon their return, they brought Western customs, ideas, and values and began propagating them throughout the Iranian society. Faced with the technological advancement of the West, they regarded imitation of Western ways to be the only solution to the problems faced by Iran.[57] The gradual separation of the secular and Westernized minority from the traditional, Islamic masses was such that their different life style and value system eventually led to the creation of a "dual culture" in Iran.

In social studies textbooks the "Westoxicated" intellectuals are introduced as agents of foreign domination. They are tools in the hands of imperialism to maintain political, economic, and cultural dependence. The "Westoxicated" intellectuals, pupils are told, have served foreigners

and led Iran to servitude since they monopolized positions of power and decision-making after the 1905-11 Constitutional Revolution. School-children are informed that although the 1979 revolution ended their rule, "Westoxicated" Iranians can act as the fifth column of imperialism, aiding the enemy from within the Islamic Republic.

It is interesting to note that in Iranian social studies textbooks, non-religious figures such as scientists, writers, or poets are never presented as role models. Introduction of non-Iranian characters is also restricted to Islamic scholars and religious leaders, with the exception of Frantz Fanon. In fact, a sharp line is drawn between religious and non-religious members of the society, depicting the former as examples of everything noble and honorable while the latter represent all that is undignified and traitorous.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of the content of social studies textbooks indicates that education in the Islamic Republic of Iran is openly and avowedly political and every topic is used for conscious political ends. Curricular content reflects the official state ideology and inculcates in the young the "appropriate" attitudes, values, and beliefs needed to maintain the status quo. The study points to a deliberate intent on the part of educators to bring about commitment to the Islamic Republic and loyalty to its leadership among schoolchildren. More importantly, however, is the commitment to Islam for which any hardship, deprivation, and even self-sacrifice is justified.

The ultimate aim of the socialization process in Iranian schools is

the creation of a model citizen eligible to live in the ideal Islamic society. The New Islamic Person is religious, politically aware and involved, proud of his/her heritage, ready for self-sacrifice for Islam and the revolution, respectful and obedient to his/her country's religious and political leaders, hates the prerevolutionary regime, rejects any form of dependence on the West, mistrusts the non-Muslim world and is highly critical of Western ways, and sympathizes with all oppressed peoples especially Muslims.

Iranian schoolchildren are presented with a sharply defined image of the world, divided into pious, brave, uncompromising, honorable, morally superior Muslims and secular, unjust, greedy, inhuman, oppressive Westerners. The Iranian society is also marked by a division between martyrs and religious and political leaders as heroes and "Westoxicated" intellectuals as villains.

Prerevolutionary Iran under the rule of the Pahlavi dynasty symbolizes all that is corrupt and degrading, while the future guided by the ulama represents nothing but glory and light. Young pupils are taught that in the battle between good and evil, light--represented by Islam, Ayatollah Khomeini, and the Islamic Republic--will always defeat darkness--depicted by the Pahlavi rulers and foreign domination. The distinction between "we" and "they," good and bad, light and dark may be judged as highly biased and one-side by many, yet it has kept the revolutionary spirit alive despite domestic political turmoil and externally-imposed sanctions and war. The existence of ideological dissent, political opposition, and even armed insurrection has not yet shaken the foundations of a structure built by martyrs and

and maintained by blood and zealous faith.

It should be noted that the findings of this study are limited to determining what kind of ideal person the Islamic Republic wishes to create as opposed to what kind of individual has actually emerged. To assess whether desirable values have been internalized by the recipients, one must not only measure the actual effectiveness of the socialization experience,but also take into consideration the effect of other socializing agents such as the family, the peer group, and the mass media.

The question that remains is whether the contradictory social, political, and cultural values transmitted by secular, Western-educated families outweigh the message communicated by the educational system as to continue the tradition of the "dual culture" in Iran? Will the value system propagated by the Islamic Republic last through the increasingly difficult years of a seemingly endless war marked by human loss, psychological trauma, and economic deprivation? These questions pose challenges to further research.

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